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47.1287.



47.1287.







JESUS TRIUMPHANT;
IN THE
CONVERSION AND DEATH
OF
ANNA CATHARINA MERKS,
EXECUTED AT ROTTERDAM IN HOLLAND,
THE 19TH OF JUNE, 1763.
WITH
A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF HER LIFE.

I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. ISA. xlvi. 16.

Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. MATT. ix. 2.



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To be born again, is, in the eyes of the world, to be baptized with water, and to have a portion of morality: but, without holiness, no man shall see the Lord. Simon was baptized, but was still in the gall of bitterness; good education may bind up man's lust, but will never change the heart; men may escape the pollutions of the world, and yet be but swine and dogs; nay, many lukewarm professors who lie under that awful sentence, "thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead," are counted religious by their neighbours; yea, are so indeed in their own eyes, and are still as far from the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, as the very prophane who are by them abhorred. Many have been enlightened, have tasted of heavenly gifts, been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, and coming short of closing in with Christ, have miserably perished.

The work of regeneration is a heavenly impression on the heart, begun and carried on by the operations of the Holy Ghost, with an Almighty power, convincing man of his ruined, lost, and helpless condition, shewing him the necessity of a Saviour who apprehends the lost sinner, draws him to himself, and enables him by faith to lay hold on him, and so, as one said, Unrighteousness unites with the Lord our righteousness, and so Christ becomes to him righteousness, justification, sanctification, and redemption.

This work may be, to them that are strangers to it, but as a mere fiction; and let a man say what he can, if God does not speak to the heart, all is in vain.

I know it might have been more acceptable to some, if it did appear in the form of a narrative; but I was afraid of losing the very expressions of the person whose latter end is represented here; and the least alteration in that material point appeared to me, as if the truth of God should have been beholden to a lie, merely for the sake of ornament.

My sincere prayer to the God of salvation is, to bless it abundantly to the soul of every reader in England, as he has been pleased to bless it to many abroad.

GRACE AND MERCY TRIUMPHANT

IN THE

CONVERSION AND DEATH

OF

ANNA CATHARINA MERKS.

NOTHING surely deserves more of our attention than the last words of dying persons, who speak concerning things of the utmost moment and importance: we generally find the death bed detects the heart, for however persons may deceive themselves before, yet conscience in the gloomy chambers of death is generally awakened; persons in this condition having no end to gain, often speak their apprehensions genuine and sincere. As we must all tread these gloomy chambers one day ourselves, how soon we know not, observations on the behaviour of others who have gone before us, when in these circumstances, may be a means of exciting us to lay these things to heart, which ought to be considered through the whole course of our lives.

What I shall present my indulgent reader with, will be circumstances of this nature, exemplified in the peculiar life, experience, and death of a young woman, executed in the city of Rotterdam* in Holland, the 17th of June, 1763. I am certain, if it be received with the same divine blessing

* Rotterdam, a pleasant City in South Holland, on the Meuse.

upon it in England, as it was in Holland and adjacent countries, my labours will not be in vain. Happy shall I be, if the glory of God, and the good of his dear people shall be promoted thereby.

It is for the most part a translation out of the Dutch, but the Translator was at the time this happened not an unconcerned eye witness thereof; but as he trusts his aim in this, is the exaltation of free electing Grace and Mercy, and the good of God's church in England, he will say no more of it, but proceed to the work itself.

Tuesday the 5th of June, 1763, about five o'clock in the afternoon, a Minister was ordered to visit a young woman in the prison, and placed there in the Mourning-Chamber,* which woman he found unconcerned asleep.

He desired she should be awakened, saying, that his intention in coming there was to speak about matters of the utmost importance. Consequently she was awakened, when the Minister desired to know her name, which she said was Anna Catharina Merks, the place of her birth, Best,† near Oirshot, her age, between one or two and twenty, her religion she said was the Roman Catholic. Upon being asked the question, Why he found her in so sad a place? She answered, she had committed such deeds as had brought her there.

Upon this the Minister told her that he was not at all surprised at her answer, because it is always a bad omen when a Minister is desired to visit a person in such a place; such persons indeed, said he, thus sent unto, can have no long expectation of life. Oh! (cried she aloud) must I then part with my young life? The Minister gave her a few minutes time to weep, replying only, that she must part with that young life, because she had spent it so wickedly, inquiring at the same time in what manner she had got her living. Upon which she replied, that she had been a servant. Inquiring if she always had been a servant, she answered, if it had been so she should not be now in such a place.

* Mourning-chamber is a place where no persons are confined but those whose crimes are found capital, to whom the first intelligence that they are to die, is given by a Minister purposely sent to them by the court; the sentence of Death is pronounced long after, and but a few minutes before the execution.

† Best, a village upon the borders of Holland, near Flanders.

The operation of sadness on such occasions, commonly takes sudden hold on the heart, and causeth either a deep gloomy silence, or on the contrary, an openness of confession and self-accusation, the last of which found place in her, declaring to him, that she was born a bastard; that her mother died while she was young, and being left to herself, without care and education, she had led a rambling life where she pleased. In the city of Dordrecht* she had bound herself to dwell at Amsterdam† as a servant to a hardware-man; consequently she had been travelling to many fairs, and when she perceived it to be a profitable business, she began by degrees to trade for herself, and had not been unsuccessful, having laid up a little money by it.

In that situation of life, a soldier cast his eyes upon her, but had left her without marrying her; some days after this, she declared she was with child by that soldier, to whom (upon his having promised her marriage) she had given up herself, and that she laid in of that child in the city of Leyden,‡ which died being five weeks old.

After the soldier had left her, and all her substance was spent in her lying in, she led a rambling life, and maintained herself by stealing others' property, though at that time not quite seventeen years old.

All the unhappiness which her whoredom with the soldier had brought upon her, did not make her stop here; but going on in the same wicked course, she proved with child again, and as thieving was her only trade, she was cast into prison for it in the town of Vianen,§ and there delivered of a dead child.

After her recovery from childbed, she was in the same town tried, cast, and publicly punished and shamed by the hands of the hangman, in the month of November, 1762. As all the unhappy issues of her whoredom with the soldier, did not stop her in that course of life, the infliction of public shame and punishment was also unable to stop her from

* Dordrecht, an old trading city in South Holland, on the river Maas.

† Amsterdam, a very capital trading city in the north of Holland, on the river Y.

‡ Leyden, is a large inland city, with a famous University, in south Holland.

§ Vianen, a town in south Holland, near the river Lek.

thieving, being scarcely set at liberty before she went on in her old course of life, till being detected near Yselmonde* by some farmers' children, was thereupon surrounded by the neighbours, and delivered to an officer to be conducted safe to the prison in Rotterdam, the 8th of May 1763.†

But to return : the Minister demanded of her what the fountain was from whence sin proceeded ? Her answer was, the wicked one, meaning thereby the devil : he told her this was very true : but, replied he, dont you think you have committed that evil yourself ? She answered yes, but that it was by the instigation of the devil. But, said he, notwithstanding it is as you say, yet you yourself will certainly be punished for it, for I observe in every man evil, yea even in the youth something very wicked, which it seems the devil layeth hold on in order to make man more wicked.

Thus after he had told her that there was such wickedness in man, manifestly visible in their youth, he desired to know of her if God created man with that principle of wickedness in him ? I cannot comprehend it otherwise, said she. You do very well, replied the Minister, in speaking plain your mind, as you comprehend it ; but suppose, proceeded he, if God has created man as you apprehend it, the consequence will be that God is the author of sin ; but God being perfectly good himself cannot create sin, "as a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit."

Have you never, said he, after you have committed some wickedness, found some anxiety within you ? Yes, said she. He desired to know of her from whence that proceeded, but her answer was she could not tell. It is, says he, from the conscience, created of God in every man as an officer of God's justice. Do you know, said he, that there is a God ? I have heard so, replied she, but I know no more of it. You believe then, proceeded he, you have not created yourself. She answered, she knew that. Yet, replied he, you are created, some being must then necessarily have created you ; that being is almighty, and that almighty one is God.

* Yselmonde, a village on the river Maas, about five miles from Rotterdam.

† The officer declared that he had minded to let her go, but her impudent behaviour, with her cursing and swearing, provoked him to bring her to prison.

Can you tell me, said he, who was the first man? Adam, said she; but the question being put to her, if she knew of any command of God given to that Adam, she answered, no.

The Minister beholding her great ignorance, and being moved with compassion thereat, sought to know if she knew anything of the holy Scriptures. She declared she knew nothing of them, and her reason was, she could not read.

The Minister then desired the gaol-keeper to let him have a Bible, out of which he read the second chapter of Genesis, and told her she was right in calling the first man Adam. You see, says he, this book must certainly be very old, speaking of such ancient things as I have been reading to you; she acknowledged this, being not quite inattentive. This book, proceeded he, is a godly book; your whole life, with all your actions, sins and thoughts, are to be found herein. The first man Adam, said he, received a commandment from God, which he transgressed; reading the third chapter of Genesis, from the first to the sixth verse to her, from that Adam descended all men, though so numerous and of so many distinctions. He told her that man proceeds from man, and as Adam by his transgressions became a sinner, consequently nothing but sinners could proceed from him, and so all men are become sinners.

Comparing this with the fifteenth chapter of Matthew and the nineteenth verse, "out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies;" you see, said he, here is your very picture, which he cleared up a little more to her, asking her if she did not wonder to find her very deeds and thoughts so accurately expressed in that book, and if that really was not her very picture? She answered yes; and he going on said, don't you think God created Adam good and upright, but that through his transgression he is fallen and ruined? because, if God hath not created Adam good, God must be the author of sin, and you know I have read it otherwise to you in the second chapter of Genesis. She answered this wholly in the affirmative. Do you know, said he, the Ten Commandments? and her answer was, yes, repeating the same in rhyme, but according to the Roman church, making from the first and second but one, and leaving out the tenth Commandment.

The Minister, without taking seemingly any notice of this, told her only, that the Holy Scripture was a wonderful book, being so many years older than herself ; she, and all men, very perfectly were described therein. Out of this book, said he, will I read to you the Ten Commandments, and began with the preface of Moses, in order that she might hear it to be the law of God ; but mentioning nothing of the two first Commandments, choosing not to enter into controversy with the sentiments of the church of Rome, began with the third Commandment, desiring to know of her, if she was not guilty in that Commandment ? If she had not abused God's most holy and glorious name above a thousand times in her lifetime ? If she was not guilty of cursing, vain swearing, and blaspheming the name of God, and other sins of that nature ? And if she, when hearing such sins committed by others, had not been silent under it, without rebuking them for it, and so consenting to it, was become a partaker of the same sin and guilt ? And when God's name was used by her, if she had done it with that fear, and the inward feelings of that awe and reverence which is due to God's name ? Now in this Commandment, said he, God will hold the guilty, not guiltless ; and as it is not expressed what kind of punishment God will inflict, all sorts of punishments are to be expected, and so you will be punished.

She acknowledged herself to be guilty in committing, and omitting against that Commandment.

Going on with the fourth Commandment, he desired to know if she had always kept the Lord's Sabbath-day holy ? If she had done no manner of work, nor taken her pleasure, neither stolen therein ? And if she had always faithfully attended God's ordinances ? She answered, she had broken that Commandment also ; she had not been thirty times in all her life to church, and then it had been merely out of pleasure, and far from any religious principle.

Upon the reading of the fifth Commandment, she said, she was not guilty of breaking ; my mother, said she, died while I was young, and my father did never own me as his : but the Minister told her, that not only father and mother, but magistrates, and all persons under whom we are placed, *must* be understood by the word parents ; declaring her to be guilty according to her own history, being run away

from the people by whom she was bound a servant, in the very place she was born, and so had been disobedient to them ; thus had lost the blessing here promised, and forfeited her life, and if she had done nothing else, but only the sins committed against this Commandment, on which she just now declared herself guiltless, she was guilty of death before God.

Upon the reading of the sixth Commandment, she answered, surely I am not guilty, because the sin of murder never arose in her heart.

This Commandment, proceeded the Minister, speaks particularly and positively of murder ; but it teaches us plainly at the same time, that the word murder comprehends the root thereof, as envy, hatred, malice &c. ; desiring to know if she never had found envy, hatred, anger, or malice in her heart against any body ? Besides, said he, this Commandment requires of us to love our neighbour as ourselves : did you, says he, never do any damage to your neighbour ? Or did you all what laid in your power, to hinder that any damage should come to him ? Because, said he, that is the natural consequence of that love ; or did not you most wickedly bereave him of his own, bringing damage to him, and if it had been in your power, should you not have ruined him ? She was very attentive all the while, and declared herself to be a thousand times guilty on this Commandment.

Her answer upon the seventh Commandment was, she was not guilty, because she had never been married.

But, replied the Minister, the word adultery comprehends all manner of unchastity ; look inwardly, said he, if you can find no leprosy there.

She blushed, and said, yes ; but it must be observed, she had said nothing at that time about her whoredom and her two children.

Upon the eighth Commandment she said she was guilty.

The ninth Commandment being read to her, the Minister said he did not doubt but she was guilty of the breach of this ; because, said he, you have probably, even before a magistrate, spoken about yourself and others, not always in truth and sincerity, and if not so, this is full witness against you ; you have altered the words of your neighbour, or spoken lies of him behind his back.

She confessed to be unclean herein, concerning herself and others.

about the Sabbath, upon a sabbath, he said, that not only the deeds therein prohibited, but at the same time, ~~the~~ ^{no} very desire to another's property is罪, thus you see, said he, the day to her godly love, where not only the sinful desire, but the desires also are prohibited, and is it with you as we finch in the seventh chapter and the twenty-first verse of Joshua, doing on that but believed you still

The whole law thus being stand to her, and she having declared herself to be guilty on every Commandment thereof, the Minister told her, that she being found guilty on the whole law of God, she ought to know that she breach of one single Commandment deserves temporal and eternal death; how much the more in her case, she being found guilty in all. Instructing her out of the third chapter of the Galatians, and in the tenth verse, that she lay under this curse, which curse consisted, 1. In a separation from God, and remaining so without hope of being saved, and without communion with, or part in, God, but must be banished from his face, everlastingly miserable. 2. In an alienation from the promises and covenant, that she could nowhere, or hereafter, expect to have the least part in any of the promises promised in God's word, and without a covenant with God; through all the ages of eternity, should beyond remain the property of him with whom she was in covenant. 3. As you are dead in trespasses and sins, consequently you never can enjoy eternal life, for nothing unclean can enter Heaven. 4. You are a child of God's wrath, which wrath of the most high and dreadful Majesty, everlastingly will be poured out upon you, you being separated from the face of the Almighty. Do you think, said he, as you are dead, all will be dead? No, said she, I believe not; but, proceeded he, do you know the difference betwixt men and beasts? And she answered, no. What question he cleared up to her; and she believed she said, that after death there remains a soul of us, which conveyed her further out of Matthew x. 28. Pray, said he, tell me if you can, how many ways there be after death? She answered, eternal glory, but spoke nothing, (which was very remarkable) of a purgatory. Some time after this first opportunity, speaking of purgatory, she said, she had sometimes being in the Roman Church, heard of a purgatory, and though she had been

thinking thereon, she could never comprehend any thing of it.

There is (replied the Minister, in answer to his own proposed question) not only an eternal glory, but a hell, a place eternally burning of unquenchable fire, wherein all the damned are cast. Pray, said he, look now upon the life you have led, and tell me which of those two places you think will be your portion.

I have hope, said she, because God is merciful; that he will forgive my sins for my youth's sake.

Will your temporal judge, replied the Minister, pardon you for your youth's sake? She answered, no. How much less, replied he, the Judge of heaven and earth, God, the righteous God himself! you can have no hope at all upon this foundation: it is certain, God is merciful and willing to forgive, but he is righteous also, and neither can nor will let sin escape unpunished; the ungodly shall surely see no life, and if you die in this condition, there is no hope for you, nor other expectation, but to be cast and kept in the flames of hell, with the devil and all the damned.

God is too righteous to pass by sin unpunished. But, said he, are there no means of escape? Yes, of prayer, said she. Tell me, replied he, how can you pray? She then said the Lord's prayer. But, proceeded he, the prayer of the wicked is an abomination unto God; how can one pray that is unclean? and you have confessed to be wholly such a one. But, said he, do you know the form of the Christian faith? She said, yes; and repeated the same in a broken manner.

The Minister, on purpose to lead her on, by the confession of the Christian faith, to the doctrine of Redemption, desired to know of her how many Gods there were? And her answer was, three; adding to it, she hath always in the Roman church, understood it so. But the Minister told her, that the church of Rome confessed with the Protestant church the same, namely, one God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Do you know, proceeded he, who Jesus Christ is? She answered, no.

The Minister shewed her the necessity of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, he being the only Saviour; that he was perfect man, or could be otherwise no surety for man.

that also the payment must be done in the same nature wherein the debt was made.

That he was God, because no created being could bear the weight of the wrath of a just and angry God, shewing that he must not only be both God and man, but a man without sin, and so not being necessitated, first to sacrifice for himself, being only capable to pay the ransom unto God, having no sin or guilt himself; furthermore, that Jesus Christ, not only hath been able to satisfy, but actually hath satisfied God's righteous justice, by his bitter sufferings and death upon the cross, and that for this only, God can forgive our sins.

That Jesus Christ died, was buried, and had suffered the torments of hell in his soul; was upon the third day raised from the dead, and after that was forty days upon the earth; was ascended to heaven, in order to pray for every one that believed in him, as an eternal High Priest, and in them, as the members of his church, to pour out the Holy Ghost; and by his power, to defend them always against their spiritual and temporal enemies.

That he sits at the right hand of the Father; that God the Father, through him, ruleth and reigneth over all things; from whence he shall come again to judge the quick and the dead, and then shall take up with him, in his return to heaven, all them who have believed in, and are through him justified and sanctified, to live eternally with him, to be satisfied with the joy of heaven throughout all eternity! That in the mean while he shall judge and condemn the unbelieving world, to be cast out eternally in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, prepared for the devil and his angels: after having spoken so, he concluded with that important truth, that Jesus Christ must be known, no other name being given in heaven and earth, by which we can be saved.

W^t I wish, said he, the mighty and wonderful God would bind this upon your heart and sanctify it on your soul! And having been seeking the face of the Lord in prayer, with and for her, he desired that for her should be read, Romans the first and third chapters; the first of Corinthians, the sixth chapter; Joshua the seventh, and Zechariah the ninth chapter.

Wednesday morning the Minister, accompanied by another gentleman, went to visit her. The Minister desired to know if she rested well the last night. She answered, no. The reason being demanded, she said, he had last night said so many things to her on which she had been thinking the whole night. He told her, as she had so much to do in the day time, night rest was necessary for her, otherwise it might weaken her body, and so make the few days she had to live burden some and miserable to her; but, said he, it is certain that the things of which I spoke to you last night are of the utmost importance, and worthy ten times more of your serious meditation in the condition you are in.

He repeated briefly what he had spoken the night before, and said, it will be a peculiar privilege, if God is pleased to bind it upon your heart, to discover to you the miserable condition wherein you are. Upon the question, if she could pray, she said, yes; repeating the Ten Commandments as the night before, imagining that to be a prayer; praying further, the Lord's prayer, ending the same according to the manner of the Church of Rome.

Do you believe, said the Minister, God to be your Father? She answered in the affirmative; and reason being demanded, because, said she, God hath created me. True, said the Minister; but do you think if a bastard child said to an honest man, you are my father, he would be pleased therewith? No, said she. How, proceeded he, can you call God your father, seeing you have behaved yourself like a bastard unto him? So you mock God, and dishonour him, because an obedient child will shew his father all love and respect; but you have given this with all your disobedience, not to God, but to the devil as your lord and father.

The other gentleman joining the conversation, said to her, Woman, yet pray, Hallowed be thy name, but how can you possibly do so; you profess, by so doing, to stand under the impressions of God's holiness, that consequently you are afraid to dis honour God, the holy bread, and that he may be magnified and glorified by you; you have done quite otherwise, you have unhallowed God's holy and adorable name, and where you should have glorified and

magnified him, you have done dishonour unto him and despised him.

You pray, God's kingdom to come; but you have set all your powers at work to build up the kingdom of Satan, to annoy the kingdom of God, placing yourself under the government of the devil as his faithful subject, to support his kingdom; so in this prayer you mock God.

You pray, God's will be done in earth as it is in heaven; but you have most wickedly abused God's holy name, and his kingdom, as much as lay in your power, endeavouring to destroy it; mean-while declaring by this prayer your will to be united with the will of God; consequently, that you are heartily obedient to his blessed will, at the same time opposing most scandalously the same, and have been obedient to the will of Satan, and to your own wicked will. You have, by your actions, said to God, Not thine but my will be done. Don't you see, woman, how you mock the Almighty by your prayer? and he will not pass by sin and mockery unpunished, and he can justly bring upon you eternal damnation.

You pray, Give us to day our daily bread; how is this possible? you was not contented when God gave you bread in an honest way, but you have, against God's command and this prayer, with subtlety and violence, robbed your neighbour of his own, where it was God's revealed will to work for your bread with your own hands, and now you find the bitter consequence thereof; the judge will condemn and punish you, and think you to escape the vengeance of the Judge of heaven and earth, whose will was, you should have been content with your wages? and so this prayer is but mocking God also.

You pray, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; don't you see you can no more pray this than the other? You have augmented your guilt every moment, with a determined intention to go on in your abominations; yea, where you was to forgive them who trespassed against you, you stole of them who were not indebted to you.

You pray, Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the wicked; here is at least as much deadly leprosy as in the other prayer; lead us not into temptation, but

deliver us from the wicked; did you never think you mocked God in this? for instead of striving with all your power to shun what could tempt and enslave you under the power of the wicked, you have brought yourself under the power of temptation, and have been obedient to the temptations of the tempter, the devil; thus have manifested with your own thoughts, words, and deeds, that to obey the temptations of the devil and your own heart, was the very life of your soul; and so you are, instead of coming out from under it, become more and more linked and chained to it. Well, Catharine, continues he, is it so about your prayers as I have told you, or is it otherwise.

She confessed, saying, You have spoken right, Sir, I have dreadfully sinned.

Yes, woman, replied the gentleman, if God give you to see what a great sinner you are, you should, as a guilty creature, sink before him in the dust, and acknowledge the greatness of your unrighteousness. Behold, it looks most dismal and dreadful round about you! you stand every moment in danger, that God, an angry God, will pour his vengeance down upon you, and oh! then all is lost with you eternally.

Anxiety and anguish fell upon her, and she was brought under a great perplexity of mind.

Both gentlemen proposed to her, if she desired their prayer; and she answered, O yes! After prayer, they recommended her, notwithstanding all her sin and guilt, to pray God for discerning light. Of the latter part of the Lord's prayer, after the Roman manner, they took no notice, but departed.

In the evening of the same day, the Minister again visited her, and desired to know how she did. I am said she, in great distress; I am afraid I shall be lost for ever, and concluded she was certain she should die very shortly; and if I die, I shall be miserable everlasting; you and that other gentleman's words lay as a heavy burden upon my heart, and I see clearly I have sinned against all God's Commandments exceedingly; and every time I prayed I did surely mock the Lord, and now I know I cannot pray, because I am a sinner, and my very prayer must be a sin to me.

I do not know, proceeded she, from whence I shall obtain pardon for my numerous sins, and without that pardon my damnation is sure; this is the cause of my distress; oh! I do not know where to fly for help!

The Minister, after repeating what was spoken to her in the morning, desired to know of her, if there were not angels that could pray for her or help her in her distress.

Her answer was, yes, and that she had prayed God to send her an angel to defend her.

Do you think, said the Minister, angels can pray for us? She answered, she thought so: he told her angels were created beings, and though glorious creatures, yet infinitely less than God; that God only was all-present and omniscient, and not the angels; and it's very uncertain, her prayers, her smart, and misery, should ever come into the knowledge of angels; and if so, surely her end must be miserable. But, said he, can Mary not pray for us, being the mother of the Lord Jesus, after the flesh; can her prayer not find intercession by her Son? She said yes, believing that Mary could pray for her. The Minister answered in the negative, not only with the arguments spoken before about the angels, but that Mary, like unto us, was born from Adam, had been a sinner, and hath obtained mercy in the same way and manner as other sinful creatures, and consequently could not do any thing for her; but, proceeded he, what do you think of the other Saints? She thought she said, they could pray for her: and he answered, no; they have been in the like sinful and miserable case as Mary and ourselves: but suppose, said he, they did know your case, and were willing to assist you, first they must obtain permission from the court of Heaven to make intercession for such a great sinner before the throne of God, the supreme Judge; that the event thereof was uncertain; and suppose permission was given them to draw near the throne in your behalf, it is still more uncertain they should obtain mercy for you: mean-while, said he, your time is short, consisting but of a few days, your cause too great, and of too much importance to venture the same upon a single may be; that you ought to consider better of it; and not to trust upon a sandy foundation, an eternity of happiness or misery.

as suppose you was to journeys, said he, to a certain city, in which city, if you came, in a certain fixed small space of time, you should receive a great and valuable treasure; but if you should come too late, you should be in most imminent danger; would you go bye roads, leading you to the farthest way, or would you run the plainest and shortest way towards it? I would go in the nearest way, said she, very good, replied he, do so here also; if you receive pardon before you die, you shall find the treasure of an eternal weight of salvation; if you are not reconciled with God before you die, you will not only run the hazard of being eternally lost, but your destruction is inevitable; wherefore then to go on in a long and uncertain road, praying to angels, Mary, and Saints, by whom there is no certainty of being heard, will they have compassion on you, pray for and find mercy for you? Oh, go on in the nearest way! Jesus Christ is the only way, the trath and the life; without him there is no salvation; he is salvation himself, and wherefore then should you put yourself in danger when you may be safe

She assented to this; and after he had called upon the Lord to look in mercy upon her, he departed.

Thursday morning the other gentleman coming to see her, asked her, if she rested well the last night; Oh no, said she! and the reason being demanded, she answered, O, Sir, I have something else to do than to sleep! I lie under God's wrath, and under the curse, if I die, I am lost for ever! oh, to die is nothing! but for ever, for ever to be lost, is dreadful! She spoke those words in great earnestness; fear and anguish was visible in her countenance.

The gentleman feigned not to believe that her concern and anguish proceeded from the fear of the second, but rather of the first, the temporal death. Does not, said he, the fear of death, and the shame that will attend it, force you to speak such words? She assured him that it was not that, but the fear of being eternally lost; this laid heavy on her heart. He desired to know, if she had been in prayer? She answered, that one had been reading for her, and that she had been praying the Lord to give her a right sight of her sins; do you think, said he, there can be any possible deliverance for you? and her answer was, I don't

know, I hope not; if I was only guilty, said she, before the world, my fear should not be great; nor my anxieties so many; I do clearly see myself to stand guilty of the breach of every Commandment of God, and if I remain so, I am lost and undone for ever, and that to be lost for ever is too heavy for me!

The gentleman perceived her to be deeply disconcerted, and under great distress of mind.

Let us, said he to her, call upon the Lord together; that prayed first alone, and the substance of her prayer was, that God would be pleased to give her a true and right sight of her sins, and that she might find grace in his sight to be changed, and converted in that place. The gentleman prayed earnestly to God in her behalf, and told her after her prayer, that it was true, there was for her and for the chief of sinners deliverance, but in no other way than through Jesus Christ, and that there is without him no salvation. This morning conversation ended therewith: the Minister repaired to her in the evening, and found her in the same condition, distressed under a sense of her lost condition; but as the conversation was circumstantially the same as in the morning, we will pass it over.

Friday morning the gentleman coming to her, desired to know how she had passed the last night? She answered, I am in great fear and anguish, from a sense of my deep misery, I see, says she, I have forfeited all things, not so much because I have forfeited my life in this world, and should shortly part with it, but rather, that if I remain as I am now, I shall be lost eternally.

He desired to know of her, if she could pray? She said she had prayed God many times out of the distress of her heart, that God would give her a right sight of her sins, and be merciful to her.

The gentleman related to her, in a brief manner, the way and dealings of God with a sinner, in bringing him into conviction of his sinful state; and, said he, that God may bring you convinced of the sinful state you are in, and lead you unto his free grace in Jesus Christ; what a privilege would that be for you! and therefore I recommend you to call upon the Lord to have mercy on you, and to convert you. Thinking this to be enough at that time, he went to prayer with her and departed.

In the evening the Minister found her in the same condition wherein the gentleman left her in the morning. She was in great distress through the fear of being lost eternally; this was a heavy weight upon her heart: she prayed first alone, and concluding with the Lord's prayer, she left out the latter part thereof upon her own accord.

The Minister desired to know the reason thereof, in such a manner, as if he did not approve of her omitting that part. She answered, that part was not good, because she doubted that Mary, or any other Saint, could hear and pray for us. He went to prayer with her, and concluded the conversation for that time.

Saturday morning the gentleman coming to her, desired to know how she did? Oh, said she, I am most miserable; I lie under the wrath of God, and under the curse! I shall be lost for ever! But, replied he, what may be the reason thereof? Oh, said she, I have no Redeemer! Do you want one, replied he? cannot the angels pray for you? She doubted if the angels could not yet do something for her.

The gentleman demonstrated to her the impossibility thereof; but, said he, what do you think of the saints? She was not quite purified from that opinion; but he made the unsoundness thereof appear to her as clear as the sun in the mid-day: and having prayed with, and for her, he departed.

The Minister desired to know how she did, when he came to visit her in the evening, and her answer was, she was now a little better. A little better, said he, that is good; but from whence proceeds that? God, said she, is righteous, but also merciful, and she hoped he would pardon her and deal mercifully with her, and if he did not convert her in the prison, it was in his power to do it in the last moment, because he did so with the thief upon the cross.

Well, Catharine, replied the Minister, suppose you had a great debt, and you desired your creditor to acquit you thereof, do you think that would be a sufficient payment? would not that creditor justly say to you, you must pay the debt or give me a surety, by whom I may be fully satisfied? Now, because you cannot pay him, neither bring a surety, would you comfort yourself in this case? No, surely, said she; with less foundation, replied he, can you conclude

that God will spare you because you cannot pay, neither have you found a surety.

He perceived her to stay upon a wrong and sandy foundation, and that somebody had ministered comfort to her from God's mercifulness without Christ, and unhappily had set her down upon quick-sands.

What God can do, proceeded he, according to his infinite grace and mercy, is no certainty that he will do so; the example of the murderer upon the cross, said he, is true, but at the same time, the only one in the whole Bible, opposed to a number of others, quite the reverse; this was not God's common method; there is one instance of this miraculously sudden mercy, that none may despair; and but one, that none may presume, for the other thief on the left hand found no mercy, but went to hell and destruction; as he cleared up to her out of the 23rd chapter of Luke; and going on, he told her, that her time being so short, she had reason to bemoan the loss of that day, which was spent without profit; and concerning the thief on the cross, said he, he had several things above you.

She burst out in lamentations, over the loss of that day. The Minister going on, told her, the thief had, before God and man, declared himself to be guilty; that he did justify the sentence past and executed on him; that he publicly proclaimed the innocence of Jesus, and in doing so, declared him to be the immaculate Lamb of God, now wil slaughtered for the sins of God's people; none of these things, said he, have as yet a place in you; you can have no ground of any hope upon God's mercy without Christ; if you sink in eternity, and if you find no Redeemer, you must perish everlastingly, there being in heaven, and earth no other Redeemer than the Lord Jesus; that there is no mercy in God but what comes through Jesus; to any sinner, however comfortably she might expect and hope for it. Your time is short, and this day lost out of it, to baird She had much perplexity, and anguish came upon her on this account; she wept and lamented bitterly, crying quite Oh! if God will give me no more, I am lost for ever. *Homo* Yes replied the Minister, that is most certain, and there is no reason to flatter yourself with God's mercy without Christ; God is infinitely perfect in his justice as well as in

his mercy, the last is as the first, and you can do nothing, woman, to persuade God to pass by his righteousness to grant you mercy.

He desired to know if she would pray? She kneeled down and complained bitterly over the loss of that day, praying God to give her a sight of her sins, and to reveal the Redeemer to her. After that he prayed for her and departed.

The following day, being the Lord's day, and the tenth day of the month, the other gentleman came to visit her in the morning, inquiring how she did, and if she had a good night's rest? Night's rest, said she! can I sleep when I see myself to be so guilty and damnable before God! Oh, I had work the whole night betwixt God and my soul, more important than sleeping.

The gentleman seeing her labour under the guilt that lay on her conscience, endeavoured to arrest her thereby. He found she had lost a deal of bodily strength that night, and the persons that attended her declared, she was the last night, at least ten times in prayer.

He compared her to a lost sheep, desiring to know if she could not perceive God's goodness in thus seeking after her, though in a dismal prison; notwithstanding you have run from him, said he, by all your sins; have mocked him, have been obedient to the devil instead of him; have lived by theft, broke his holy Sabbath, all what he has commanded omitted, and done what he prohibited: yet, I say, he comes to seek you as a lost sheep, in order, if you will follow, to bring you to his fold. After reading to her the fifteenth chapter of Luke, dont you see, proceeded he, that you must come to God even as the Prodigal Son, confessing with shame you have sinned, being unworthy to be called his child?

The gentleman was not ignorant, that sometimes a kind of repentance, called gallows repentance, proceeding more from natural fear than the power of grace, was found in persons under sentence of death; yet, here he thought something of a better nature appeared; he began to think that God was about to glorify his name in her conversion, as a vessel of free mercy.

It is not against God's way and dealings with sinners,

said he, to reveal their iniquities to them in the night; speaking from the thirty-third chapter of Job, in the fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth verses, "in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men in slumberings upon the bed, then he openeth the ears of men and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man; he keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword."

While he was speaking out of that part of Scripture she was very attentive, telling him directly a very remarkable story; in the night, said she, before I committed the crime for which I am to suffer, I saw in a dream, very clearly, the place where I, the following day, committed the fact; the things that I stole, the farmers who apprehended, and the officer that took me from them; the cart that carried me away, the very way I went along, the judges before whom I was tried, the prison, and particularly this very room where I am now in; the scaffold whereupon I shall die, and the very manner of my death. Now I do believe, said she, this was a warning of God, but I did not regard it.

The gentleman hearing this with wonder and amazement, told her, this was most probably a warning from God, and a very remarkable one, to draw her off from her wickedness. Have you not, said he, abundant reason to stand amazed at the goodness of God, that he is still pleased to think on such a vile sinner as you declare yourself to be, in order to warn you of the danger to which you lay open, and what thereby deservedly might come upon you?

Further taking an opportunity from the day, (being the Lord's day) he told her, this was a holy day unto the Lord, wherein the people of God were assembled together in the house of God, the house of prayer, seeking the Lord with prayer, thanksgivings and praise, and hearing the word of God preached as food for their immortal souls; but your transgressions, said he, have cast you out from the society of men, and have made you unworthy of that blessing now enjoyed by others, particularly as you have always neglected the preaching of God's holy word when you was at liberty.

But still, proceeded he, it is a great privilege in your

circumstances, that God has been pleased to send the other gentleman and myself, as a means in his hand, to warn you, before you go hence and be no more seen.

Would you look upon me, said he, to be your friend or enemy, if I saw the top of the prison in flames of fire and gave you warning of it? I should look upon you as my friend, said she. The other gentleman and I, said he, brought really that message to you; the wrath of an eternal God hangs over your head, and will certainly, if by flying you do not escape, fall upon and dash you in pieces. You ought to look upon us as ambassadors sent of God to warn you to fly from the wrath of God which is ready to fall upon you.

Now she began bitterly to weep and to bewail herself, crying out, that eternity, and therein to be lost, brought a distress upon her which she was not able to bear; indeed it went further with her that morning than ever before. The gentleman said to her, will you not call upon God now? and she falling down on her knees prayed earnestly, crying out, being all in tears, O God, convert me! O God convert me! repeating that several times. The gentleman gave to be read, for her, Job thirty-third, Jeremiah thirty-first, and Luke the fifteenth chapters.

In the evening the Minister coming to see her, desired to know how it was with her? O Sir, said she, how should it be with me! I am full of anguish, and deeply concerned about my sins! Don't you think, replied he, that I deal very hard with you, speaking continually about the greatness of your sins and the danger wherein you stand? it would be more pleasing to you if I did comfort you, saying, be of good cheer, God is merciful, and will pardon your sins, because he sees you deeply sorrowful and mourning under it.

He spoke this to try her if she did still hold any such sentiment as in the night before; but her answer was, no Sir, you have clearly shewed me, out of my own words, that I still want the Redeemer Jesus Christ to pay my debts; my sins are not forgiven me, and I cannot be comforted.

Woman, said the Minister, I see you are under great concern, perplexity, and anguish; pray tell me from what proceeds this; is it the fear of death and the shame that will attend it? I am, said she, not afraid of death merely

as death, because I never could do good upon earth ; I am at Vianen punished for my transgressions, and that could not bring me from my sins and wicked life ; and if I was permitted to live, very probably I should make it worse ; Oh, I am not worthy to behold the sky !

May be, proceeded he, your concern and anguish comes from the fear of eternal damnation, whereof you have some idea, and that surely waits upon you, if you remain unconverted ? Yes, said she, that am I afraid of.

Yes, woman, replied he, that is not without a cause ; that will be the place where God's wrath and righteous vengeance will be poured out upon you for all your abominations ; but must you not confess God to be righteous, if he did punish you everlastingly for your sins.

Yes, said she, there is no punishment so heavy which I do not deserve.

As she spoke those words she was struck with a deep perplexity, and had such apprehensions and troubles of mind, that a person being present to attend her, was exceedingly affected.

Yes, said the Minister, I wish God may give you a right apprehension of your sins committed against a holy and righteous God ; he has borne with you in his long suffering and compassion, otherwise he would have struck you dead before now ; a God, who in the very time you most abused his clemency, has sent you means for your eternal salvation, in order you should not be so much in fear of punishment, but the nature of your aggravation.

He asked her, if she had a desire to pray ? She falling upon her knees, prayed with many tears, and much fervour, that God would be pleased to give her a true sight of her vile sins ; after which the Minister prayed to the Lord for her, and when she rose from her knees, she was still more sorrowful and concerned about her deep misery, helplessness, and desperate condition before God.

The Minister told her, that in ancient times, by God's express command, six cities were appointed to be cities of refuge, where the manslayer had liberty to fly to, in order to escape the avenger of blood, and being in such city was secure and out of the danger of all persecution ; in all the roads leading to this city, he found, at certain distances,

direction posts placed with this inscription on them—**Escape, Escape, as a recommendation to him not to stand still, but to fly on till he was safe in the city of refuge.**

So is it, proceeded he, with you ; the Lord Jesus, whom you only know in the mere sound of his name, is thus as a city of refuge where the guilty can hide themselves from the avenger of blood, which is God's burning and pursuing wrath ; the avenger of blood is at your heels, the wrath of God threatens you, the law, with all his curses, draws near, eternal damnation makes speed, and death advances with quick and horrid strides. Under all these circumstances, God is pleased to use that other gentleman and me even as the direction posts erected on the road, crying out to you continually, **Escape, fly, fly to that city of refuge, the Lord Jesus : fly with all your sin and guilt, in order to be hid in his perfect atonement and righteousness ; and if the Lord is pleased to teach you this, then you shall truly know what it is to escape.**

Monday morning the other gentleman visited her. How do you do, said he, as he entered the room ? I am very well, Sir, replied she. Wherein consists, said he, your being very well ? I will tell you, Sir, said she ; last night, after the other gentleman departed from me, I fell upon my knees [the people who attended her that night, declared she was three quarters of an hour upon her knees] praying God to be pleased to give me a right sight of my sins, and God gave me to see my sins ; the sin wherein I was born, and all my sins through the whole course of my life ; the places where, the manner how, and the people with whom I committed them ; it was just as if they were written and hung up before mine eyes ; I felt my sins, and the smart thereof caused me to be inwardly so heavy that I could not bear them ; it was as if the wrath of God should have consumed me ; still I cried unto the Lord : O God, here lieth a great sinner, with a multitude of sin and guilt which I cannot bear ! and oh ! if thou wilt punish me for my sins, there can be no punishment in eternal damnation which I have not deserved !

By this I was brought into darkness ; it was as if I was blinded, and I was afraid I should have sunk away in that darkness ; but still I cried unto God, O pardon ! pardon ! and execute not thy judgment against me !

... Here came into my heart, as a voice, 'The Redeemer liveth.' O God, said I, should there live a Redeemer for me, for such a one as I am! thereupon came to me, 'Your Redeemer liveth.' Oh, said I, should there live a Redeemer for such a one as I am? who is then that Redeemer! and now it was as if a voice said in my heart, 'That Redeemer is none else but the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour who hath shed his blood upon the cross, that your sins should be forgiven thee.' I said thereon, Oh wilt thou then redeem me! and thereon came as a voice inwardly in my heart, 'I am yours, and thou art mine.' It was as if the Redeemer stept in for me at the bar of God's righteousness, and that all my guilt and sin was laid in a scale or balance, and Jesus' righteousness in the other; but that Jesus' righteousness was far the heaviest, even more than all my sins.

Then came I out of darkness, and the light broke in upon me, and the Redeemer took away from me all my sins, and my heart melted into ardent love, and my whole soul was drawn after to the Redeemer.

The gentleman being amazed, said to her, but Catharine, are you not afraid that you deceive yourself? I can scarcely believe what you now have told me.

Oh no, Sir, said she, because the Redeemer will not reveal deceitful things to me; besides, I did not know there was a Redeemer.

He recommended her to pray to the Lord for discerning light, in order, if she had deceived herself, not to venture her soul upon eternity on any imagination; do it, said he, continually; if your experience is genuine, the Lord will lead you further, and clear you up in what he has done already. And after he had prayed to the Lord for that purpose, he departed.

When the Minister repaired unto her in the evening, the first thing he observed in her was, she never before looked a person in the face that spoke to her, but now she straightly fixed her eyes upon him, and appeared outwardly as one in a serene and calm frame of mind.

Upon the question, how she did, she answered, very well; and reason thereof being asked, she gave the same account of herself as she had done in the morning to the other gentleman; and when she related how she had seen

herself born in sin, he abruptly said, how is this, woman, art thou born in sin? Yes, said she, if I had never committed any sin, the sin wherein I am born should have caused my eternal ruin. But, said he, are you not afraid you deceive yourself, is it not merely a strong imagination? Oh, no, said she, the Redeemer will not reveal deceitful things to my soul; and when that word came in my heart, as with a voice—she would go on, but he breaking her discourse, said, but woman, God speaketh no more now a days, with an articular voice; that takes no more place, but he worketh by means of his holy word. Yes, said she; but the voice which I heard, was not in my ears, but inwardly in my heart.

You must know, replied the Minister, the heart of man is very deceitful, and the devil is very subtle; he knoweth a great deal of the Bible, and is acquainted with the phrases thereof; he has used the same frequently in old times, and to this very day he is the prince of darkness, and it is easy for him to deceive men, and lead them (under God's permission) to eternal destruction; can it not be, think you, that he has deceived you, in order to make you careless, and to drag you to hell with an imagination?

The devil, said she, never taught me any thing but wickedness; I was brought up in the Roman religion; the sins are my own sins, but God hath over-ruled it so, that I must come into this prison to be instructed in the way of salvation, and to have the Redeemer revealed unto me.

Do you think, replied the Minister, that every one that is cast into prison, and is to die a shameful death, is sent there of God to be actually converted? No, said she, because none shall be converted that cannot pray with such inward earnestness. Then you apprehend, said he, that what God has given you, is for your prayer sake? Not for my prayer sake, replied she, because the Holy Ghost did work that prayer within me; but for Jesus Christ our Saviour's sake, who had shed his blood upon the cross. But, said he, how do you think it is possible that God should be pleased to look down upon such a one as you are? Only out of his great love and mercy, said she.

Well, replied he, you say it was only out of his great love, but don't you know, woman, that you are, through

your sins, an object of God's hatred, wrath, vengeance, and holy displeasure? Yes, said she, that is true, but the Lord did not do it for my sake, but only out of his mere love for Jesus Christ my Saviour's sake.

The Minister, though he thought the Lord had revealed some material things unto her, thought it prudent to recommend her to pray according to the prophet David's prayer, in the 139th Psalm: "Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

This I think, said he, to be prudent for you, in order that if what you say you have experienced is not sufficient, you should not deceive yourself, and so be deceived for ever, it being a matter of eternal importance.

Sir, said she, I have been this day frequently in prayer, but the more I pray for light, the more the Lord strengthens me in what he has done for my soul.

Have you, said he, at present an inclination to call upon the Lord? She answered, yes; and being upon her knees before, she began prayer, and praised God, saying, O God! I thank thee, that thou hast been pleased to grant such great mercy to me such a great sinner, and have revealed to me the Lord Jesus Christ, who has shed his blood upon the cross for the forgiveness of my sins, and has stept in for me at the bar of thy righteousness, and hast paid all my debts: but if I deceive myself, and if my way is not right in thy sight, let me not go on in blindness, but give me a right sight of my sins.

After prayer, she said, when I pray the Lord, in case I deceive myself, to give me a right sight of my sins, the Lord stops me therein.

The Minister desired to know if he should pray for her? If you please, Sir, said she; but, replied he, for what must I pray? And she answered, that if he judged it to be good, what she had already desired of the Lord, he should do the same.

The Minister prayed earnestly, laying her before the Lord as he found her; after prayer he desired to know if she understood him. Yes, said she, because I had an inward experience of all for which you prayed. My prayer and desire of God, replied he, has been to open your eyes,

if your experience is not right. I have desired with you the same, said she, but the more I pray, the more I receive light in it. I wish, said the Minister, your confession may be found true in the eyes of an omniscient God, that I and others may rejoice upon a good foundation.

Oh, Sir, replied she, I wish you felt it so as I do; the angels in heaven rejoice in the conversion of such a sinner, and it appears as if they would say, Can you not rejoice in it also.

The Minister still recommended her to pray for further discernment, and committing her to God's free mercy departed.

Tuesday morning the Minister coming to her, inquired how it had been with her since last night; did any thing particular, said he, happen to you; did you rest well in the night? Pretty well, Sir, said she; I slept very well, but not long. How can it be, said he, that you can sleep sound? Because, said she, I had an inward peace, and as I awaked, sweet communion with the Redeemer, and it was even as if I saw him. But, said he, the Redeemer revealeth himself not in that manner, that we can see him bodily. Oh no, Sir, said she! I don't mean with my bodily eyes, but inwardly, and it was as if the Redeemer said to me, You in me, and I in you. But replied the Minister, what must I understand by those words?

With the words, You in me, and I in you, (said she,) the Redeemer meanted, you shall not be lost. Oh, it was as if the Redeemer called to me, Fear not death, and the punishment you shall suffer, neither the devil nor everlasting damnation; I have delivered you from all. Those words, said she, dropt so sweet in my soul, that through the same an inward joy arose in my heart; I was constrained to rise from my bedstead to praise my dear Redeemer for it.

When she spoke this the other gentleman entered the room, and finding the Minister with her, desired to know the particulars of their conversation.

The Minister desired the prisoner to repeat to the gentleman all what she had spoken to him, which she did accordingly.

They desired of her to repeat briefly her whole life to them from her youth; their intention in this was, to observe

if pleasure or abhorrence should appear in the remembrance of the things committed by her; but it seemed as if all that was past was out of sight and forgotten by her, and as if she only was able to speak of things present: and it was a difficulty to bring her to an account from her infancy till she was a prisoner in that room wherein she was converted; but notwithstanding that, she did it; and the Minister desired to know if she did not find herself in the same situation of mind as at that time? No, said she, because I hated most bitterly my judges and the officer that took me prisoner. Well, replied the Minister, don't you hate them still? No, Sir, said she, I love my judges and the officer, because they are means to bring me to my Redeemer. This she spoke with a great emphasis.

The gentleman took particular notice of her behaviour and countenance while she gave an account of her life and actions, as she related them at the minister's first visitation to her; but oh! what a differnce was here, as she seemed in the first time to have a secret satisfaction therein; now shame and deep abhorrence were visible over her whole person; light and darkness differ no more from one another than the manner of this repetition with the former account.

Will you repeat once more, said the minister, what you told this gentleman last Monday morning, and to me the night of the same day?

She was quite serene in mind, and complied with this request most willingly, and there was not any material difference to be observed between both accounts.

The Minister, in order to try her, told her, that when the Lord converted a sinner, he did it in order that such a one should glorify him upon earth; but you cannot do this, said he, your time being but short. After she had been silent a little while, she answered, I hope to glorify God in my heart, but if I did live a hundred years, I could not sufficiently praise him for all the blessings which he had bestowed upon me. It appeared as if she would say, no less than an eternity is wanting for that.

At this instant she was called up by the court then sitting; she received the message without the least mark of fear or alteration of mind, and taking a civil farewell of both gentlemen, she was led away to the court.

The gentlemen entered in discourse about her for a good while; but she staying longer away than they expected, and the time of her return being uncertain, they departed.

The Minister coming to see her that evening, desired to know how she had been since morning; and her answer was, very well; she said, she told the court something of what God had done for her soul.

The Minister trying her said, but do you insist still upon those things? do you never suspect it? is not the heart of man deceitful? and could you not be deceived therein? do you call still upon God for light, in order that the truth thereof may be discovered to you.

O Sir, said she, I cannot deceive myself herein, and when I pray for light, the Lord strengthens me more and more in the truth of what I have told you. Do you truly think, said he, you are a changed and converted woman? Yes, Sir, said she, I experience, I see, and I meditate concerning things which I never knew of before now.

The Minister thought it necessary to speak to her about the nature of conversion, and read to her the thirty-third part of the Catechism of Heydelberg, in order to see what answer she should give upon it.

True conversion, said he, consists in two things; first, in the putting off of the old, and secondly, in the putting on of the new man. Well, Catharine, proceeded he, what do you think to be the old man? I believe it to be sin, said she. What is then the putting off the old man, said he? and her answer was, she believed it to be the taking away of sin. What think you, said he, is the putting on of the new man? I believe, said she, that will take place when I am in heaven. The Minister instructed her, that this took place already on earth, as soon as man is converted, Well, then, said she, I believe it has already took place in me, because I am quite changed from what I ever was before.

The Minister told her from the eighty-ninth question, that the putting off the old man, is a hearty repentance for sin, by which we have brought God's anger against us, and at the same time it works increasing hatred to all sin. Now, said he, can you say you ever repented heartily? O yes, Sir, said she, because my sins have caused me to smart inwardly, and have sorely oppressed me.

The Minister desired to know the cause why her sins had been so oppressive to her? Because, said she, my sins have provoked such a long-suffering and merciful God, who had so long spared me in his great compassion.

He shewed her, out of the ninetieth question, that the putting on of the new man, was a hearty believing and rejoicing in God, through Christ, accompanied with a hearty love and desire to live according to God's will in all good works. Did you ever, said he, find in you such a hearty joy in God? Yes Sir, replied she, I feel that hearty joy in God in me at this very moment. But, said he, how do you come by that? And her answer was, only through Jesus Christ the Saviour. But have you, said he, also a desire to live according to the will of God? Yes, said she, and I hope in heaven to do it better than I can do now on earth.

The Minister, though very well satisfied with her answers, thinking it proper to try her further, said, in a very earnest manner to her, don't it appear to you as if some doubts remain in my mind about you? I think you believe me to know more than you do, and doth that never bring in you some suspicion about yourself, that all is not right with you, seeing I know more than you?

She gave a very serene answer; but the Minister declared, it could not in any degree be expressed by words, but the substance thereof was like the words of David, in Psalm cxix.—“I am wiser than all my teachers,” as certainly the grace of God makes a man.

The Minister going on to try her all manner of ways, if she stood firm to that she declared to believe hitherto, it appears, said he, as if it is equally the same to you, whether I think well of you or not? She was very much troubled and grieved at those words. Well, Catharine, said he, are you grieved because I speak so to you? Should I not, Sir? was her answer, when I can never give God thanks enough for such blessings as he hath conferred on me, and there is nobody that praiseth God with me for it.

After a little more conversation they went both to prayer, desiring the Lord to give her every thing that she stood in need of, and the Minister departed.

Wednesday morning the other gentleman came to her, and desired to know how she had been since the last night.

I begin, said she, now more and more to long after the time to be with my Redeemer. But, woman, said he, are you very sure you stand safe, that when the time of your dissolution is come you shall certainly be with the Redeemer? Pray tell me what ground have you for this confidence. She gave him a recital of what the Lord had given her to see in the foregoing evenings, and how she was more and more strengthened therein. But, said he, are you not afraid that the devil, that subtle enemy will deceive you? No, not at all, replied she; the devil has hold on me no more; Christ hath delivered me from him. But, said the gentleman, the devils are many; his name is Legion, and the Redeemer is but one. True, said she, but the Redeemer is God, and is stronger and mightier alone than all the devils together. But, said he, do you know that the Redeemer is a man? Yes, Sir, said she, but he has redeemed me with his godly blood; and if he was not God, he could not have redeemed me. After some more discourse, they fervently joined in prayer, and pointing out some chapters in the Bible to be read to her, he departed.

Wednesday evening the Minister coming to the prison, found some gentlemen of great quality waiting for him, who told him they had heard a remarkable change had taken place in the prisoner, and that they had a strong desire to hear it in his presence, from her own mouth, which he gladly consented to: the gentlemen went into the room, and the Minister with them.

Catharine seemed greatly to wonder upon the first sight of the company. You need not to be surprised, said the Minister, only answer the questions I will propose to you with truth and freedom; and he conversed above an hour with her, the gentlemen marvelling at her answers, and were very much affected with them.

They desired the Minister secretly to make her speak about the doctrine of justification. I am willing, said he, but I cannot do it in theological terms, because she will not be able to answer the same; but, says he, may be I can let you hear from her, under a similitude, the doctrine of justification.

Upon this he turned towards the woman, desiring to know if she stood not more than once with great concern

before the judges at the bar? Yes, said she. Did you not stand there, said he, as a criminal, and when your crimes and the punishment you deserved were laid before you, did you not find an equity therein? She answered, yes. May be, said he, you should have been very glad if any one, at that time, had been your advocate, in order to procure a pardon for you? O yes, said she. Well, proceeded he, what did you think that Sunday night, when you stood before God as a criminal, being unable to see your sins?

God, said she, appeared to me as a righteous Judge; I saw I was a guilty sinner, who had nothing to pay for my sins, and that no punishment in eternity could be inflicted upon me which I had not deserved. Did any body, said the Minister, appear at that instant to be your advocate? Yes, said she, Jesus Christ, who had shed his blood for me upon the cross, appeared on my behalf at the bar of God's justice. But, said he, how did you know Jesus Christ did so for you? Because, replied she, he said to me, Thou art mine, and I am yours; and he took all my sins away, and drew my whole heart over to him. Did you feel at that time, said he, any joy in your heart? Yes, said she, very great joy, so that I melted into love before him.

One of the gentlemen asked her if she did not find in her heart a bitter hatred against her judges? No Sir, said she, it has been so with me, but now I love them. Human woman, said the same gentleman, is it possible you can love them, when according to law they will bring you to death? Yes, said she, because they will bring me to my Redeemer for ever.

The Minister desired to know if Jesus Christ had done nothing more for her, besides the shedding of his blood?

She declared she could not properly answer this question, and broke out in a flood of tears. He desired to know why she was so much grieved? All my thoughts are gone, said she, because I do not know how to answer that question; and Oh, now I have lost my pledge! If your thoughts are as you call it said the Minister, have been good thoughts, they will certainly return. He ordered to be read for her the seventh chapter of Luke, and after prayer, departed with the gentlemen.

Thursday morning the other gentleman coming to her, inquired how she did? I am, said she, very ill in body. Well Catharine, said he, may be you may suddenly and unexpectedly die before the time of your execution. No, Sir, said she, I do not believe that; I must be set as an example of God's grace. Yes, replied he, but also as an example to the world; that is true, said she, but only for men to take an example on me, and to fly from such sins as I have committed; but Jesus Christ has paid for me at the bar of God's justice; I have no punishment to fear, and shall not suffer any after death.

She told him what sorrow she had the night before, when the Minister had put the question to her to which she could not frame a proper answer, and that she had lost all her thoughts; meaning she was in a dark frame, as the church complaineth—my beloved is gone away, he is departed from me; that she could not rest the whole night, but had been continually calling upon the Lord, and had not ceased till her thoughts (as she called it) and her instructing dear Redeemer were come again, saying to her, Fear not, I am with you; and that she thereupon had been so affected with an inward unspeakable joy, that she wished to find words to express her feelings.

The gentleman asked her, if when she lost her thoughts, (as she called it) she had not been in doubts and fears about her interest in Christ? Yes, said she, it brought doubts, fears, and anxiety upon me, but now I again believe the work to be in truth.

After a little more conversation and prayer he concluded this visit.

Thursday evening came the Minister to her, and found her in a quiet serene frame of mind; he examined her according to her capacity in an earnest and expressive manner, concerning the circumstances she was in, and the dreadful eternity wherein she ere long must enter.

She gave a clear and expressive answer unto all his questions, concerning her hope and expectation in eternity; the Redeemer, said she, who is revealed unto me, has redeemed me from eternal destruction, and will bring me safe to endless glory, and that will be far better for me; because in this world I do nothing but sin, but there I shall sin no

more, but praise and glorify God for the salvation conferred upon me.

The Minister desired to know if she had received her thoughts again, about the loss of which, the foregoing evening, she had been so much grieved? (Here it must be observed, the Minister had not been able to see the other gentleman, to whom she related, in the morning, the renewed manifestation of the Lord Jesus to her soul.) She answered, yes; but, said he, is it not all the same to you, to have those thoughts or not, because, having or missing them, you remain the same person? No, said she it is not equally the same to me, because the loss thereof made me miserable, and sore afraid to be lost at last.

The Minister desired to know, how and in what manner she had those thoughts, which she loved and counted to be so profitable for her, restored to her again? She answered, after fervent and continual prayer and wrestlings with God to reveal himself to her again, the Redeemer was revealed to her, as she had declared to the other gentleman in the morning.

The Minister heard her words with wonder and affection; which words, though very simply expressed, were the marks of real and experimental truth.

He went to prayer with her, and after that, recommending her to examine herself as under the eyes of the Lord, blessed her, and went away.

Friday morning the other gentleman came to see her and brought a person with him, and found her in the same frame of mind as the Minister left her the evening before; she gave a general satisfaction to all those that heard her; they went to prayer together, and as nothing material had happened since the night before, he departed for that time.

The evening of the same day, the Minister, with some other gentlemen, visited her; but before they entered the prison, one of the gentlemen thought he found some inconsistency in her behaviour. She said continually, said he, she was not afraid of death and the shame that will attend it, but last Tuesday she desired of the court to be respite for a little while; which, proceeds he, can be nothing but the fear of death. The Minister desired him to speak to her about it.

The company found her very much fatigued, because she had met with the continued conversation of several gentlemen through the whole day.

But notwithstanding all that, she continued firm and unmoved in her mind, about what she had experienced before.

Concerning what seemed to be contradictory in her behaviour, as mentioned above, the Minister said to her, well, Catharine, can I not see the fear of death in your countenance? She answered in a very serene manner, No, Sir, I am not afraid of death; the day wherein I shall die will be the most blessed day of my life. But, said he, have you not been afraid of death? Yes, Sir, said she, before the Redeemer revealed himself to me I was sorely afraid. But, replied the Minister, was not you last Tuesday afraid to die? No, Sir, said she. Did I, replied he, dream of it, or did I hear something of it? did not you (this he spoke in a very quick manner) sue for a respite last Tuesday? Yes, Sir, said she; consequently, replied he, for fear of death, otherwise you would not have done it. O no, Sir, said she, not for fear of death, but only to have an opportunity to glorify God a little more upon earth, and to be instructed a little more, because I know so little.

If we observe what the Minister spoke to her on Tuesday morning, as mentioned before, namely, that God converted men to glorify him upon earth, which she could not do, her time being so very short, speaking in the way of objection against her conversion, in the very nick of time as she was called up to the court, no wonder that she, having a true desire to glorify the Lord on earth, and finding the court friendly to her, sued actually for a respite.

The Minister went to prayer with and for her, and ended the conversation of Friday night.

Saturday morning both gentlemen visited her, and found her in a calm and comfortable frame of mind, and after a heart-searching conversation suited to her capacity, she continued firm and sure in the hope of salvation, through Christ the Redeemer.

The other gentleman who had met with a person that made the same objection about her suing for a respite, was fully satisfied with what she said about his objection, being nearly the same words she spoke to the Minister the night before.

The Minister said to her, are you not afraid, because this morning you shall be brought in the open air,* there to confess and declare yourself before God, the judge, and the world, to be worthy of death, and to hear you summoned against Tuesday next to be executed? She answered with a very quiet mind, No Sir, I can hear no word more pleasing than that which will proclaim death to be at hand; I long for the moment in which I shall be for ever with my Redeemer; you must not conclude death, to be death to me, because it will bring me to eternal life; but, said she, I am rather afraid of the multitude of people that I shall see there together.

Well, Catharine, said the Minister, that proceeds now from a mean spirit, not to be afraid of death and the dreadful summons thereto belonging, and yet to be afraid for the people. Yet it is true, said she; but I hope God will strengthen me.

Do you desire, said the gentleman, that we shall pray for you? If the gentleman please, said she; and being upon her knees, she prayed first alone, if God would be pleased to give her strength, and to keep up in her the hope which she had in Jesus Christ her Redeemer. Do you desire, said the Minister, the Holy Scripture shall be read to you? Not at present, said she; and reason being demanded, she desired to be alone in prayer; both gentlemen, by her desire, prayed for her and departed.

Saturday in the afternoon both of them repaired to her again, after she had been summoned to appear the Tuesday following, to be executed. The Minister had found an opportunity to inquire about her behaviour at that time, which proved very satisfactory, and to the admiration of every one that saw her there. She was kept in a very quiet frame of mind, no alteration was observed in her countenance and behaviour, but every one had observed her face, under proclamation of death, to be overspread, as it were, with a visible mark of joy and gladness.

The Minister, only to hear what she would reply, said

* The prisoner confesseth in the open street, before the prison door, to deserve death, and is summoned by the chief judge, against such a day, at such an hour, to appear upon the scaffold to be executed. The custom in Holland.

to her, was you not frightened when death was proclaimed to you this morning ? It was not so, Sir, said she ; never was any word so sweet to me as that word ; I came back with more gladness than I went thither, knowing now the time of my dissolution to be very near. But still, said the gentleman, death is the king of terrors to every thing living, and how can any body rejoice in the approach of death ? What you say, Sir, said she, is true, but it is not so with me. I hope, through the grace of my Redeemer, Jesus Christ, to meet death joyfully !

The eye of the Minister lighted upon a piece of paper lying on the table ; he desired to know what it was and the other told him, it was a verse of four lines, that he repeated the day before as he was in conversation with her. She desired to know if they were to be found in the Bible, or in any other book, as she had a desire to learn it by heart. I answered, it was neither in the Bible or in any other book, and I wrote it by her desire. The Minister desired to know if she knew it by heart ; and her answer was, that notwithstanding her attendant had read it twenty times over to her, she was incapable of repeating it by heart, though it was but a verse of four lines.

By this we may see how bad her memory was ; that in consequence she could not have learnt her experience by repeating what she only heard others speak ; therefore it is evident she had learnt it by the inward instruction of the Holy Ghost, according to the word of God, in which she naturally was entirely ignorant.

In the morning of the Lord's day, the gentleman came to visit her : inquiring how she did, she answered, she was very ill in body, having great pain in her bowels. The gentleman, in order to try her once more, laid hold on that opportunity, saying to her, is it not evidently clear, that the displeasure of God rests still upon you ? Because, said he, if you had an interest in Christ, and your sins were done away through him, don't you think you should be free from the smart and punishment of sin also ?

No, Sir, said she, God doth this in order to try me, to see if I will cleave unto him in this trial. I have deserved a thousand times heavier punishment, yea, damnation itself. But, woman, said he, if this continued to your death ? She

immediately replied, No Sir, I don't believe that ; the Lord will take it away from me ; but if it was not so, and lasted a thousand years, Christ has suffered for me more than a thousand times so much upon the cross.

The gentleman wondered at her manner of expressing this, and was very much affected therewith. Shall I call upon the Lord, said he, before I depart? Yes, Sir, said she ; but did not desire him to pray for the taking away of her pain. When he had prayed earnestly he left her.

After public worship in the afternoon, the Minister coming to her desired to know how she did. She answered that she had been very ill with the pain in her bowels in the forenoon, but that the Lord had taken it away.

It is remarkable, that in the morning she told the other gentleman, that the Lord would take her pains away, at the same time it was clear, by her very expressions, that her heart was subdued unto the will of God : here was the answer of her faith ; God actually took her pains away : probably it was not an imagination, but a believing expectation, in which she was not ashamed, but confirmed.

The Minister examining her again as before, said to her, what are the grounds of your expectation? She repeated freely and willingly, the same experience as she did before. When the question was put to her, if she never had been in doubts and fears about her state? Yes, Sir, said she, I had times wherein my thoughts were gone, and I had lost my pledge, and then I was very much perplexed with sorrow, but my Redeemer was so good to comfort me again, and to bring me into my former establishment.

After a little more conversation, they kneeled down before the Lord, praying earnestly that he would grant her all she wanted in her circumstances. The Minister blessed her, and departing, ended the conversation of that day.

Monday morning the gentleman visited her, and desiring to know how she did, she told him, that the man who attended her the night past, had spoken very particularly to her, more than any body did before that attended her, and how he told her in what manner God had forgiven him his sins, and had delivered him from eternal damnation ; and she could not, she said, but express her wonder thereat, because never one of all them that had been with her had

done the same ; saying, at the same time, she did not know that either of the gentlemen that had been to visit her had been so taught,

He answered her, Don't you believe that I and the other gentleman have spoken to you according to the holy word of God ? Yes, said she, but the gentlemen can read. Well, said he, don't you believe that the other gentleman and I know experimentally the things spoken to you ? I do not know it said she; I will hope it; but the gentleman never told me of it, and if the Rdeemer Jesus Christ is not revealed to the gentlemen, they are destitute as yet of true knowledge.

The gentleman wondered much at this remark, and saw clearly that she believed the grace of God not to be universal, but that she had a conception, that it was a free gift of God without respect of persons.

Surely the expressions of this prisoner must appear to be truly foolishness to a natural man that hath never been blessed with the knowledge of himself and of God's most holy nature ; yet it is a certain truth, according to the word of God, and the experience of all Christians, throughout all ages, that a converted man never is more in his element than when he may speak or hear spoken of God and his ways.

A vessel can give nothing out but what it has within; nature speaks only of nature, and a Christian speaks of God truly; as long as he is upon earth, he is obliged to converse with naturalmen, but never with that inward joy and satisfaction which he experiences in the conversation of his fellow Christians. Behold, said the apostle, it is all new; truly, so is it here indeed ! his inclinations, the goings out of his love, his pleasures, all are new; the old man, and what pertained thereto, is a burden to him; it is a pleasure to him when any one in his presence is speaking of God, his ways, and the experience of the upright in heart; and no wonder at all, because there is directly an amen in the soul, and a union in, and a melting over of the heart; how much more must this take place in the prisoner ! The Christian approaching near the blessed hour of death, how is his mouth filled with rejoicings ! fain would he make every one with whom he converses a partaker of his gladness, and to be really in his blessed condition. The prisoner was newly converted, she was sure she should in a short time have nothing to do with

men, and the time of her dissolution being at hand, very probably she thought nothing, or very little, of the things of this world ; and why may we not suppose that she stood like the apostle Paul, when he cried out, "I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds?"

Above all this, what made the conversation of the person who attended her more agreeable, was doubtless this: she being born and brought up in the Roman religion, and having in the course of her dissolute life no conversation, save with them that were the same with her in wickedness ; having never heard any thing of God's dealings with sinners ; no, never by the gentlemen that came to visit her in prison, who wisely concealed that from her ; no doubt the account this man gave of the Lord's dealings with his soul must have been precious to her ; particularly as she compared her experience with his, being the same in substance, so much the more she was confirmed in her own conversion thereby.

The two beforementioned gentlemen that day meeting, the one told the other what the prisoner had said to him ; the Minister said he was glad that he never had spoken a word of his own experience to her ; that he was fully satisfied she could have taken nothing from him ; that he was very glad the man who attended her that night had not been with her before, he being now sure she could take nothing from any other's experience.

That man declared in a company of about sixteen persons, that he had spoken with her from the evening he came to watch her till three o'clock in the morning ; that she had given him an account of her conversion in substance, the very same as is related above ; that he, after she had rested a while, had awakened her about five o'clock in the morning, in order to speak a little more with her ; that she very willingly arose, and after she had been in prayer, began to speak concerning the grounds of her hope as before ; that he had given her a little interim of time, in which she took an opportunity to speak with the other attendant, and that she told him what inward satisfaction she found in the conversation of that man, contrary to another that attended her some nights before. of whom she spoke with a kind of abhorrence. The same man declared

to the company, that he found no doubtings in his heart about the happy state of that woman.

Monday afternoon the Minister visited her, but to his great surprise he found her very confused and dark, having not enough presence of mind to answer properly the questions he proposed to her concerning the hope that was in her. He desired to know the reason thereof; and she answered, she was very much fatigued; she had no rest the whole day, by reason of a series of discourses she had been obliged to enter in with several gentlemen that had been visiting her. The Minister found himself deeply concerned about it; the shortness of her time was much impressed upon his mind, he wished to see her work cleared up in her lasts moments, and finding her in that condition, he resolved to depart, thinking to be alone in prayer was the best for her, if the Lord would be pleased to settle her mind and to enable her to speak with clearness about her expectation of heaven. But some gentlemen being present, desired him to speak a little with her, and being persuaded, he said to her, Well, Catharine, I hope that all our labour is not in vain, that you should deceive yourself at last with a fond imagination of having a sure ground? She answered, No, Sir, do not think so; be not concerned about me, God hath blessed the labour done on me, and he will reward you; but now I am so tired out and fatigued that I cannot so well speak with you as I could wish. The Minister replied, let me propose this one question to you, and endeavour to give me an answer upon it in truth and sincerity: Is it not a great thing to deny a religion wherein you are born, to embrace a doctrine whereof you never knew any thing, and to believe this to be the true doctrine, wherein the way of salvation, according to the word of God, is to be found and to be resolved to die therein? She answered, Yes, Sir, if I had remained in my blindness in that religion, I should have been unhappy, as all those are that are kept in blindness, except they are instructed in the way of salvation by God himself in their soul; for which I bless God, who hath brought me hither for that purpose; but now I can speak no more, being so fatigued. Then the Minister and the other gentleman took leave of her.

It appeared clearly by her answers, that she did

not depart from the Roman religion, without perfect persuasion of mind, and she was convinced of an absolute impossibility of being saved without the inward teachings of the Holy Ghost.

How simple her expressions are! they are powerful and to the purpose; there is not a may be in them all to be found; she speaks openly and plainly; and as if this was not plain enough, she added, that every one that died in a natural state must be unhappy. But what merits our observation most is, that she placed her happiness not merely in being instructed into the true doctrine, but the being instructed by God himself in the soul; and though in darkness and fatigue, she speaks clearly and weightily as to that point still.

Tuesday morning being the day of execution, about nine o'clock, both gentlemen came to visit her: finding her upon her knees in prayer, as soon as she arose they desired to know how it was with her; and her answer was very well; I am glad my time is at hand; I have been rendering thanks unto God, because he hath enlightened me again. I don't fear death at all! be not afraid concerning me; and if you see me weep, dont imagine it is out of sorrow, but of joy and gladness, because death shall not be death to me, but an entry into eternal life, to be for ever with Jesus, my most precious Redeemer, who bought me freely with his godly blood, and has paid for all my sins!

When we behold this object as we ought to do, as a person who was a few days hence so deeply ignorant, we cannot but wonder to hear her so plainly utter such language standing, upon the very brink of death.

That there are ungodly persons who smite their conscience as upon the mouth, saying they are not afraid of death, may be true; but then, their very expressions are of another nature; never proceeds the name of Jesus out of their mouths, and they appear so commonly from the first time of their imprisonment; but this prisoner did certainly not fear death; and if we look over her whole behaviour, we shall find the reason thereof, and that is, as she confesseth, even her interest in Christ.

It would be inconsistent with all sound reason, if any body would ascribe this to be a strong and deluded imagina-

tion ; surely, the horrible presence of death would soon overpower it. Besides, we remember how afraid she was to die when the gentlemen first visited her.

The Minister said to her, Catharine, in three hours' time you shall be in that fathomless eternity ! Yes, said she, that is true ; I know not yet what great mercy God hath given me, but then I shall know it perfectly ! I am full of joy inwardly, because there comes an eternity to glorify and praise God in, with all the blessed angels, in an everlasting blessedness ; I cannot rightly do it here below, and if I lived ever so long I could not perform it as I wish.

The other gentleman said, what is the ground of your confidence upon which you believe that ? Because, said she, I have an interest in Jesus, the Redeemer of sinners and of me, who calleth now at present inwardly in my soul, Fear not, I have redeemed thee ; thou art mine.

The Minister said to her, do you desire us to pray once more for you ! She said, yes, if it pleased the gentlemen. But, said he, what will you we shall pray for ? and she answered, he should render thanks to God for all the blessings hitherto conferred on her ; and if it would please the Lord, to strengthen her in the hour to come ; and that if she stood in a deceitful way, God would discover it to her.

The reason why she desired the gentlemen to render thanks unto God for her, seems to proceed from this, that nobody had spoken a word of comfort to her. The other gentleman offered prayer to God according to her desire.

Notwithstanding the proceedings of both gentlemen about this person may appear strange to the reader, they had a proper ground for so doing, that no uneasiness could properly enter their minds afterwards about her, as if she had taken over as her own, the experience of another ; but at the same time observation had taught them that some persons in her condition did speak a deal of experience, of which persons afterwards remained a deal of suspicion in the minds of the survivors, about the truth thereof, as the Reverend Doctor Comrie related of such a person in his works ; but above all, such as are established by the most high God himself, have no need to be established by men.

The gentlemen told her, they would let her alone a few minutes by herself, but they should soon return to her

again ; she declared, her desire was to be alone with the Lord, the few minutes she had to live. Then both the gentlemen went up stairs in a room where some company was together; they uttered something about the last conversation with the prisoner ; a gentleman present observed that it might be, the prisoner would alter her mind by and by, when she should hear the sentence of death pronounced upon her at the bar. The Minister answered, that such thoughts took place in somebody else, about her appearance in the open air, the Saturday before : but that the suspected alterations of mind appeared to consist in a greater enlargement, and a greater measure of gladness, upon her approaching happiness. The Minister asked that gentleman, if some anxiety, darkness, or the fear of death, did appear in her, he would conclude her to be lost ? No, said he, if she had grace before. The Minister replied, that for the space of more than eight days, she had declared that to several, and to him and the other gentleman present, even that very minute, had given a full satisfaction.

The Minister said further, that all the uneasiness he had the night before, was entirely taken from him that morning, as she had given him and the other gentleman the clearest testimonies of her hope and expectation in Christ, the Redeemer.

Both the gentlemen went again to the prisoner, and found her in the same blessed situation as before ; and after they had been for the last time with her in prayer, they staid a few minutes with her ; and the minister said, have you still any thing to say to us, because we do not know if we shall have any opportunity to speak with you ? She said, she hoped to have opportunity to speak to them till the very last moment, concerning the ground on which she stood, and on which she hoped to enter eternity. But both the gentlemen pressed her strongly, if she had anything to say, to do it presently. She answered, Sirs, I thank you for all the love and labour bestowed on me, such an unworthy one. The Lord God shall reward you ! The Minister said to her, Catharine, we desire no reward; our reward will be great, if we have been the means, in the hand of God, of plucking you, as a brand, out of the fire of *eternal destruction*.

You are, said she, clean of my blood!

The gentleman pressed her again, if she had any thing to say, to do it now, before they departed. I hope, said she, opportunity will be given to me to speak to you; but if not, I wish you a good night, till eternity comes; and then I hope to dwell with you both in everlasting glory to praise our God, and to speak of Jesus, and his glorious redemption!

She spoke these words with a great deal of affection, and with a flood of tears. Whereupon the Minister answered, if these things are so, and God hath mercifully given unto you so great a salvation, we wish you also a good night, till eternity cometh; and then you shall be our own and rejoicing in the day of Jesus Christ, when he shall appear. The other gentleman spake to the same purpose, and so departed from her, greatly affected.

She was fetched up directly, to hear her sentence pronounced at the bar; and both the gentlemen went into the antechamber, to wait for her.

When sentence was pronounced, she was led to the gentlemen by two officers; she stood in a blessed and perfectly serene frame of mind before them, in the presence of that gentleman who made the remark about an alteration of mind in her when sentence should be pronounced, several others being present.

The other gentleman spoke first to her, saying, Do you stand fast in the expectation that your end will be peace? Yes, said she; now are the moments, I stay here, tedious to me! O now I see Jesus, with arms stretched out, waiting for me!

The Minister said to her, Did you say any thing at the bar? No, said she. Had you a desire, said he, to say any thing there? She answered, she would have asked pardon for the lies she had spoken to the court before her conversion; for which lies she began to weep bitterly. The Minister replied to her, Catharine, the sentence of death will be executed on you this moment, for all your trespasses against the law of your country: rest therein. But this moment, you shall appear before a God who is of spotless holiness, and of majestic righteousness, before whom nothing can stand that is unclean; do you think to stand

before him? Yes, said she, because that God hath given to me his Son, and he hath paid righteousness for me at the bar of his holy justice. The question being put to her, if she now saw no sin in herself? She said, I believe, Sir, I shall sin as long as I stay here, but Jesus has covered the same.

Now she was led to the place where, according to custom, public prayer was to be made for her. The other gentleman was obliged to stay in the antechamber, being so much affected; and it is very remarkable, that she told him, the Monday morning before, that she believed he should not attend her to the end. The Minister followed her, and when she kneeled down, public prayer was made for her.

When she arose from her knees, the Minister desired to know, if she had any thing more to say. Yes, said she, I have a desire to speak a word to the spectators: and it being permitted her to do it in that place, she said, O good people, take example from me! and fly from the sins I committed; that you may not come under such punishment! but my sins are forgiven me, and my trespasses are blotted out.

Now she was led to the scaffold, erected against the back front of the Mansion House, and having communication therewith: the Minister looking behind him, saw the executioner lay hold on her, tying her hands together, which she suffered with the utmost quietness, laying her hands together of her own accord; and walking on after the Minister, she said, Now am I going to my salvation! One of the officers that led her, reported afterwards that she said to him, you lead me away, but I am happier than you!

Coming upon the scaffold (there being a multitude of several thousands of spectators) she lifted up her hands, speaking the same words as she spoke before; O good people, take example from me, &c. As soon as she came to the stake on which she was to be strangled, she beheld the place with a wonderful quietness of mind; then turning herself towards the judges there present, she made a gentle compliment with her body, and stepping with a surprising freeness of mind upon the footstool, placed herself against the stake, as one that prepared herself to die.

The Minister feeling himself mightily strengthened, said to her, Catharine, I take now heaven and earth to witness,

that we have set before you the blessing and the curse, death and life ! what is now your choice ? and she answered, Life. Upon what ground ? said he, and her answer was, Only upon the perfect righteousness of Jesus, who hath paid for all my sins.

The Minister replied, is this then the only ground upon which you shall enter eternity this moment ? and her answer was, Yes, Sir. Whereupon the Minister, under great affection of mind, said to her, Now then, Catharine, depart in peace, and the God of peace be everlastingly the God of your wonder and rejoicing ; and sing before the throne the song of the Lamb, "Thou hast redeemed me to God by thy blood !" Catharine being now no more able to speak, the cord being tied, bowed as it were twice, nodding with her head, as a sign that she understood what he said, and as with an Amen, answered.

Such was the God-dishonouring life, and the God-glorying death, of Anna Catharina Merks : an object wherein the Lord was pleased to manifest the glory of his free unmerited grace.

Nothing is too wonderful for the Lord Jehovah : and the mouth of eternal truth hath testified against the Pharisees, that publicans and harlots should enter the kingdom of Heaven before them. Truly, with the Lord are escaped from death as many as have accepted him : he hath given them power to be called the children of God : he stands continually in the corners of the streets and highways inviting every one ; he giveth the same full gracious reward to them that come at the eleventh, as to them that come at the ninth hour. We may not sin, that the grace of God should abound ; God forbid ! But doubtless, it casts a more glorious light, when the object on whom the Lord is pleased to bestow the same, is a noted sinner above many others : but most peculiarly so, when that noted sinner is ignorant above others also.

How gloriously shineth then the grace of God in the person of Anna Catharina Merks ! Most evidently is this truth manifested in her, that God is no respecter of persons, but that he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy.

She was an object that did not know she had a conscience : true she had experienced an anxiety of heart

after she committed sin ; but from whence it proceeded she was ignorant. Where is deeper ignorance to be found ? How small is the difference betwixt such a rational being and one of the brute creation ! To feel the dictates of a conscience, and not to know from whence it cometh, is very like irrationality. Such an one certainly lies open to the commission of all wickedness, because where a man naturally is born in all sin, he will greedily plunge himself therein, if he be not restrained. The first restraint is the conscience ; and where a man is ignorant thereof, nothing can be expected but the overflowings of all manner of sin and wickedness.

She knew no more of a God, by her own confession, than by hearsay ; consequently, the inquiring after a truth of such eternal importance had never been the subject of her serious attention : though it is certain, according to St. Paul, that all natural men live without God, yet at the same time, they know there is a God by more than hearsay, but Catharine did only know it by that.

None must apprehend me to mean that she was created with less abilities to know God than others : far be it from me to suppose it : she confessed she had anxieties, and that the same proceeded from conscience, and conscience being placed in her of God as a judge, and judging according to that law which is naturally written in the hearts of men, consequently she had a knowledge of a supreme law-giver created in her, because where a judge is, there is a sovereign ; and where there is a law, there is a law-giver ; but that knowledge being dark through a corrupted nature, instead of being cleared up by education or otherwise, was as a talent buried in a napkin.

The greatest part of her answers are remarkable. When the Minister put the question to her, if she believed that God had created the first man evil, she spoke sincerely, without dissimulation, saying, she could not apprehend it otherwise. Truly this ought to make many hundreds blush, who confess with their mouths that God created man good and upright, but deny the same truth by their actions. She spoke plainly as she apprehended it, and it is most evident, she acted in that manner from the very beginning.

She knew, however, the name of the first man to be

Adam. How she came by that knowledge remains dark to us: but we have reason to believe, by her life and education, that she had heard this but historically, rather than that she was instructed therein, in order to lead her up to the knowledge of her misery: at least, she knew nothing of the Holy Scripture, and he who knows nothing thereof, may be reasonably styled deeply ignorant, because he knows nothing of the way of salvation; though God, as God, may be revealed in our hearts, but not as a God of salvation: and what profit was it to her to know that the first man was called Adam, she knowing nothing of the first command, neither any thing of the fall of man, and so remained ignorant of her own misery?

But who must not tremble when he beholds her an object chosen by God as a vessel of mercy, that under all her ignorance is clean in her own eyes! Besides, that the same object had but a few days to remain in this world, and must be led in that little space of time through the whole way of conversion.

How strange must it have appeared to her, to hear the fall of man out of the word of God! in what condition must her mind have been when she was convinced she was born in sin, a child of wrath, deserving hell from the womb! what sorrow compassed her heart when she heard the law of God read to her, and was found guilty of the breach of every command thereof! what anxiety must have filled her mind when the Minister, by the word of God, set before her the breach of one command to be deserving of everlasting destruction! how much more dreadful the damnation upon the breach of the whole law, which she confessed herself to be guilty of! must she not have trembled, when the Minister opened unto her the nature of the curse! Are we able to represent the situation wherein she was at that time, if we add to it, that she was certain of the shortness of her life? Sure the issue had taught her that the Holy Ghost carried on the work within her very powerfully: the first conversation struck her to the heart, and the first night must be a witness how oppressive the burden of sin was to her, and how she was bowed down under it: this will appear clearer anon.

Meanwhile here is another mark of her deep ignorance;

she did not know the difference betwixt man and beast. She spake of an heaven, but was ignorant of hell. She had heard something of a purgatory in the church, but could never make any thing of it. By all this there appeared to be a greater ignorance in her than the very heathens, who supposed there were punishments and rewards after death. She not knowing there was a hell, consequently apprehended that every man after death was saved, because she could make nothing of a purgatory. Upon the question, How many ways there were after death? An eternal glory, was her answer, Who ever saw ignorance equal to this?

She did not know what to make of a purgatory; but when the Minister spoke of a hell, the dwelling place of the ungodly after death, and gave a terrible description thereof, how must her affections have been moved thereby!

She knew not who Jesus Christ was; besides, she believed there were three Gods. In her are the words of St. Paul fulfilled, that Jesus Christ crucified was "an offence to the Jews, and foolishness to the Greeks; but to them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, the power and wisdom of God."

However deeply ignorant she was, yet the word spoken was blest to her directly; it worked with her the same night: and when both the gentlemen came to see her in the morning, she could not conceal it, it lay so heavy on her heart; she was in anguish in the prison, and her soul was now in a more dreadful prison, which quickly swallowed up the thoughts of the former.

Her refuge in God's mercy without Christ, her youth, and prayer, were no more anchors to hold her spirits up.

She was convinced of sin, of God's justice, and judgment that was to follow; eternity lay heavier than lead upon her soul, and where she turned, she found no helper; and if there was such an one, as the Minister told her, she did not know him, neither in what manner to approach to him, or how and what to pray for, but to repeat the Ten Commandments. In this truly she was not more ignorant than many, whose business it is now and then to go to church, and desire to be esteemed as persons of great knowledge; meanwhile they believe the law and the form of the Christian faith to be a prayer. None of them is ignorant enough

to take an act of parliament to be a petition to the same parliament; and still, they call the law a prayer to God: but this was all over with the prisoner; she stood guilty from the law of God, and when she had recourse to the Lord's Prayer, the gentleman took that from her in his first visit; in which time she was deeply convinced she had mocked God in every part of that prayer, as many times as she had used it.

O how dreadful now was her condition! eternal damnation pressed upon her heart, no door of escape was open, and death was ready to drag her upon the scaffold: but still she held fast on something; she had prayed for an angel to defend her, and she believed saints and angels could pray for her, the Minister took this and all other false refuges from her, pointing her only unto a crucified Saviour.

She remained in this mournful condition till Saturday; the hammer of eternal destruction continued beating upon her heart, and not so much the first, as the second death represented itself every moment to her, surrounded with a train of pains and horrors; while the first death seemed to threaten not to give her a single moment's respite; and she was convinced already, that after death no reconciliation was to be found with God, knowing not the said Jesus.

She was unhappily visited that afternoon by one that ministered comfort to her without Jesus Christ. This gave her a little ease: she listened to this without thinking, that if God's mercy was greater than his righteousness, (which necessarily it must be, if he pardoneth without satisfaction) that his righteousness must be imperfect, and consequently, God be no more God.

That little ease she paid dear for the very day of her foolishness, and bewailed the time she had lost with abundance of tears. As soon as she had heard a description of God's righteousness, she felt the weight of all her sins universally through this mistake, in such a peculiar manner, that the following morning a weakness of body, and a visible alteration in her person, were to be seen.

From Saturday evening to Sunday night was the most dreadful time she had: the anguish of soul, and the wrestlings therewith, cannot be uttered with words. Every thing she had before was now taken away from her, no

where could she find any opening : she stood still by what she missed ; but if that should ever be given unto her was a great doubt, and without that all was by her hopeless.

Not without astonishment can we behold, that just upon that Sunday Morning the gentleman who had been so many times with her was constrained to speak, from the thirty-third chapter of Job, about the dreams, which gave her directly an opportunity to tell him what warning she had of God in a dream, the night before she committed the last theft, for which she was to suffer ; because this brought not only a greater weight of sin upon her heart, but she found a most clear evidence, that God still thought on such a great sinner, in giving her so timely a warning.

The Lord who, according to his eternal purpose, knew how to glorify his grace in her, directed the mouths of both the gentlemen, and blessed their words to her. They both beheld her with pity wrestling with her misery, and it was visible she was hopeless ; she saw she had nothing in heaven and earth in which a dreadful eternity could be ventured upon, but the only sacrifice of Jesus, and she could not apprehend that God could be pleased to look down upon such a great sinner, to give her an interest in Christ. Now she gave all up, her hope perished, and she did nothing but bewail her sins, calling upon God to have a right sight thereof.

Truly, this is the end : before we go over to God in Christ, we must die to ourselves, the life of our own hand must be lost, we must sit loose to every thing before the Lord Jesus, who stands waiting with arms of love stretched out, who will speak peace to, and sweetly embrace our souls.

So it was with every one that was ever brought over to God in Christ ; so was it with Anna Catharina Merks ; when the waters did cover the tops of the highest mountains, when she could find no rest for the sole of her foot, like Noah's dove, God gave her an everlasting rest, against which the very gates of hell shall never prevail. When she saw herself poor and needy, God gave her eternal riches ; and when she was sinking without hope, God gave her to see his glory ; when she was broken down entirely, Christ built a palace of silver for her wherein his name, *here and hereafter*, and the free dispensation of his high and godly love, shall everlastingly be glorified.

It is far below the spirit of a Christian to think it too mean for the Lord to look down upon such a criminal ; we can only see into the decrees of God when the issues thereof appear ; man sees things quite otherwise than the Lord. The great Samuel took the eldest son of Jesse to be the man ; but it was the meanest of his brethren whom the Lord had chosen to be anointed king.

Now was it the time of love for Catharine. God did look upon her in mercy, and Christ told her she was his. She was set at large, the Redeemer stept in for her, and the burden of sin was taken away.

Behold a deeply ignorant person, who knew not she had a conscience, neither the difference between man and beast, and was ignorant of a hell : but now, in a peculiar manner, though such a manner as is according to the word of God and the experience of all Christians, she was brought from the power of Satan to the kingdom of God's dear son, and from darkness to God's marvellous light.

It is needless to repeat the remarks here and there inserted in this work ; the reader may judge if therein is found any thing that contradicts her conversion.

Happy was she already : the sting of death was taken away ; the threatenings of the great enemy could no more lay hold on her, though before her conversion eternity was dreadful to her : as death was horrible to her before her conviction, the more to be wondered at was her gladness about eternity, and quietness of mind about her temporal death. Death, said she, was for her no more death, but a door to everlasting life : she said it not only with her mouth, but her whole behaviour confirmed it. When she was summoned on Saturday, in the open air, to appear the Tuesday following to be executed, not the least fear appeared in her ; a changing of countenance was seen in her indeed, but it was joy and gladness ; and we may say of her as David said to God, of himself, he had "turned his mourning into rejoicing."

The eyes of every beholder were fixed upon her when she appeared upon the scaffold, but none perceived the least disquietude of mind in her : she was in a perfectly serene frame of heart, the lingering moments were too tedious to her : but if upon the scaffold any affection was to be seen in her, it was her longing for eternity.

It is not without reason asserted, that when a Christian is enabled by God to believe firmly, he cannot but long for eternity; but a few reasons there are which caused her to long above other Christians. She was now upon the place where she was to die; the punishment of her crimes, which had been only represented to her before, was now with the infamy, pain, and all the horrors that accompany such a death, straight before her eyes; but the sting was taken away: now she stood in that juncture of time wherein, if Jesus had not redeemed her, she should have sunk into a horrible hell. Now, she was sure to obtain a glorious Heaven as soon as her soul was separated from her body: she saw she did not deserve Heaven, but eternal damnation, on whose brink she should have been standing now, if Jesus had not been hers. What could this work in her but an unutterable thankfulness; and what could proceed from it but the utmost longings to thank and glorify her benefactor for such a heavenly blessing, conferred on such an unworthy one! this caused a quiet and serene mind, and was visible in her upon the scaffold.

Unbelief, that slandereth the deeds of God's converted people, may ascribe the very deeds of Christ to Beelzebub, and bring in against the quiet frame of this pious soul, a subtle pretence: the thankfulness of Catharine, said he, must have broke out upon the scaffold in rejoicings and songs, if she had been converted: others, (who they say are apt to believe in her conversion) think it would have been no wonder if she had broke out in rejoicings; but God did not please it should be so,

Rash judgment indeed! not distinguishing the cause rightly: we have heard of rejoicings in the Martyrs, but this woman suffered for her sins and trespasses, not in the cause of God and for his glory. It is true, the sting of death was taken away, but she saw her guilt and trespasses much clearer than if she had died blind and unconverted. She had sinned, and was about to receive the punishment; what could conversion work in her, but a free confession? She confessed her crimes willingly and without reserve, though she said she had no sins, because Jesus had covered the same; she shewed clearly she was sensible of her sin, *because she had a desire to ask pardon for the lies spoken*

to the court before her conversion, and she bewailed the same with a flood of tears ; and further, as she said, Good people, take example from me, &c. God is a God of order, never calling evil good : and what greater rejoicings can we expect of such an one who died a criminal, though converted, than that she cried out, as she really did, My sins are forgiven me, and my unrighteousness is covered !

The quietness of her mind, rejoiced and amazed every one that saw her die : if we attend to her behaviour upon the scaffold, and the whole of the last morning, nothing is more evident than a conversion.

But if so be the work had not been so much cleared up in her last moments, it would be no evidence at all that she died graceless ; but this was perfectly cleared up ; not in a wild or loose manner, but still and serene. She saw on one side her sins, and the punishment she was to suffer ; and on the other hand God's mercy : what could this work in her but calmness of mind, a sitting loose to this life, and a longing to be with Jesus ? and these three things were found in her.

Abraham said to Dives, "if they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, they will not believe though one rose from the dead :" truly it is so ! the Almighty had manifested in a most convincing manner, by words and deeds, that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh : do natural men believe this ? They confess it with the mouth ; but when the confession is made through the Spirit, he is no longer a natural man ; because "every spirit," saith St. John, "that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God."

A Christian knoweth full well, unbelief will never cease to make objections ; but he cares little for it, when all is right betwixt God and his soul ; and it will be far from him to doubt the glorious rest of Anna Catharina Merks.

Truly the Lord has glorified himself in her, the angels of Heaven have sung praises unto God for it,* and the free

* It is worthy to be observed how wonderfully the Lord was pleased to work upon the minds of several of his people in the time this prisoner was under conviction ; several persons that had never seen her, but hearing what a work there was upon her soul, were constrained to wrestle with God in her behalf, and more than one received an answer from the Lord, by which they were enabled to believe that the Lord

grace of God in the conversion of Anna Catharina Merks,
is a shining jewel in the crown of Jesu's merits.

She liveth before the throne of God, and sings for ever
praises to her dear Redeemer, Jehovah-Jesus. Amen.

would convert her. But one instance I cannot pass over in silence, knowing it to be true. A poor Christian woman, highly favoured of the Lord, who hardly ever heard any thing of the prisoner, was wonderfully constrained to think of her as she was sitting in her own room, the day before she was executed ; and knowing nothing of her conversion, but only that she was to die the following day, wished in her heart that God would be pleased to bring the poor prisoner out of soul-darkness into his marvellous light ; and instantly darted powerfully those words into her soul—"She shall need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth her light, and she shall reign for ever and ever." (Rev. xxii. 5.) And the woman believed that she was converted, or should be so before she died.

It is observable, that the room wherein the prisoner was at that time, was under ground, so that, night and day, all the light she had was by a candle.





